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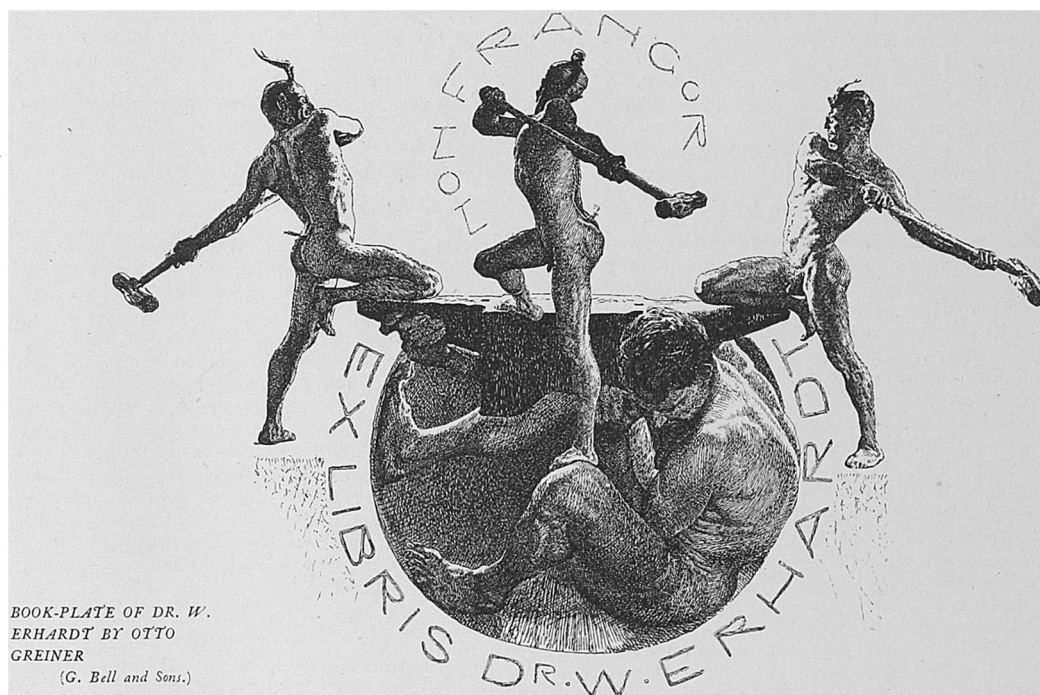
GERMAN BOOKPLATES

upon its stem ; and that in these, in its habit of growth, in the heavy perpendicular droop of one, or the severely upright lines, or swaying curves of another, its real essential character is found. And these qualities, while most strikingly evident in the general effect of the whole, are often only slightly marked in a separate part or spray. But it is only by striving to reproduce this essential character that we may hope not merely simply to come nearer to nature, but also to reach a higher artistic standard.

'The necessity of supplying full details of all parts of the plant, to fill the purpose for which these drawings are principally intended, *i.e.*, as practical working studies for artists and designers, has, unfortunately, in many cases prevented the decorative treatment being the

first consideration. To fill shortcomings, the coloured drawings have been supplemented with sketches of separate parts in various stages, and these again with short explanatory notes. These have no pretension to be botanical descriptions, but simply to give briefly such further particulars as seem likely to help or interest artists or students making use of the drawings : technical botanical terms being as much as is possible avoided.'

For beauty of decorative arrangements and taste in the spacing of the delicate tints, Mr. Foord's studies can well be compared with the designs of Watanabe and other modern Japanese illustrators. The end paper of this beautiful volume is a clever adaptation of a floral motive for ornamental design.



BOOK-PLATE OF DR. W.
ERHARDT BY OTTO
GREINER
(G. Bell and Sons.)

GERMAN BOOKPLATES*

THIS new volume of Messrs. Bell's 'Ex Libris Series' is a companion and supplement to the volume on English, French, and American Bookplates already published. To the uninitiated it may be a surprise to find a volume of some 530 pages, devoted entirely to one branch of what would seem to be a very small subject. But the enormous quantity, as well as the varied interest of German Ex Libris, will justify, at least in the eyes of the collector, the appearance of this work.

German Bookplates. A Handbook of German and Austrian Ex Libris. By Karl Emich, Count zu Leiningen-Westerburg. Translated by G. Ravenscroft Dennis. London : George Bell and Sons. 12s. 6d. net.

Count Leiningen estimates the total number of German and Austrian bookplates at about 12,000, a figure which is almost certainly below the mark. Among them will be found the work of almost every engraver of note, from Dürer and the little masters of Nuremberg to Max Klinger and Otto Hupp. Indeed, anyone interested in German engraving could hardly do better than study the illustrations scattered lavishly throughout this book. They give an excellent idea of the different styles in design, and the variations in taste, which have prevailed during the last four hundred years.

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Much scorn has been poured, by literary men with other hobbies, on collectors of *Ex Libris*. Yet it is impossible to examine this volume without feeling that the author has some justification in his boast that a well-arranged collection 'will provide a fund of interest and instruction, not only to the specialist, but to anyone who is interested in art, history, genealogy, heraldry, engraving or decorative design—subjects of which few educated people nowadays can afford to be wholly ignorant.'

Count Leiningen has treated his subject with a truly German thoroughness, for which, no doubt, the serious collector will thank him. After some introductory chapters on Methods of Reproduction, German and English Heraldry, Inscriptions on Bookplates, and sizes and varieties of *Ex Libris*, he traces the history of the bookplate in Germany and Austria, century by century, from the earliest hand-coloured woodblock, dating about 1470, of which a most excellent facsimile is given, down to the innumerable productions of the present day. Ecclesiastical *Ex Libris* are treated in a separate chapter, which is one of the most interesting in the book. It was the possession of libraries which made the monasteries in the Middle Ages the centres of intellectual life and the distributors of learning, and it is not surprising to find that most of the great houses possessed bookplates. Many were not content with one, but had new ones either on the accession of a new abbot, or when some considerable addition was made to the library. The Swiss monastery of St. Urban had at least thirty different *Ex Libris*, and many of the Bavarian abbeys had eight or ten varieties. Almost all monastic bookplates display the coat of arms of the monastery or the abbot, or of both, generally surmounted by the mitre. Behind the shield is the crosier, and, often the sword, the sign of temporal authority.

The finest German bookplates belong, of course, to the early part of the 16th century. Dürer designed six undoubted *Ex Libris*; three of these are illustrated, and several others are assigned to his pupils. Stimulated by his example, the Nuremberg school produced a large number of superb plates, of which many examples are given, by Barthel and Hans Sebald, Beham, Jost Amman, Virgil Solis, and others. The three plates attributed to Hans Springinklee—one of them that of Eck, the opponent of Luther—are especially remarkable for their bold decorative treatment. We must pass over the 17th and 18th centuries, and the first part of the 19th, the most uninteresting period of all. The last twenty, we might even say the last ten years, have witnessed an enormous revival of bookplate designing, much of a most interesting character. Mr. Fred, in a recent number of this magazine, drew attention to the inferiority of German Arts and Crafts. In the designing of *Ex Libris*, however, Germany is far ahead of this country, not only in the number of the plates produced, but in their artistic quality. It is true that the curse of allegory has descended very heavily on many of the artists of the present day, whose designs are crowded with all sorts of objects, from microscopes to Madonnas. But apart from the vagaries of amateurs, and the unimaginative correctness of drawing masters, there remains the work of such men as Klinger, Greiner, Sattler, Hupp, Eckmann, Vogeler, Orlik, Barlösius, and many others, which is of the highest interest, not only to collectors of bookplates, but to every student of art.

PARTS VI. and VII. of Messrs. Charles Letts's 'The Hundred Best Pictures' are in no way inferior to the preceding numbers of this admirable publication, which is the highest praise they can possibly be accorded. Any endeavour to present the world's great masterpieces in painting to a large public in a cheap and yet artistic

form, deserves sympathy and encouragement, and the publishers cannot fail to meet with the success which they are entitled to expect. The new parts contain reproductions from paintings by Vandyck, Greuze, Romney, Meissonier, Corot, Constable, Gainsborough, Burne-Jones, Millet, F. Madox-Brown, Murillo, and Rubens.

NOTES

EXHIBITION OF IRISH ART INDUSTRIES.—The Art Industries Exhibition to be held on the Royal Dublin Society's premises, Dublin, in conjunction with the Great Irish Horse Show, will take place on August 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th. The Exhibition comprises lace, embroidery, wood-carving, metal work, leather work, photography or burnt wood work and designs, for which upwards of two hundred pounds will be offered in prizes. Every facility is afforded those who desire to compete for the prizes—there is not even an entrance fee payable—the only serious condition in the Rules, is that exhibitors must be resident in Ireland.

The Royal Dublin Society will have competent saleswomen in charge of the Exhibition, and the amount received for articles sold, will be forwarded to the exhibitor, no commission being charged on the sales. Competitors who do not desire to sell their exhibits, must mark them 'Not for Sale.'

Intending competitors should make early application to the Registrar, Royal Dublin Society, Leinster House, Dublin, for prize lists and entry forms. The last day for entering for the Exhibition, is Saturday, July 13th.

ST. JAMES' ART CLUB commenced its existence on April 15th last, at the Studio, Members' Mansions. It is unique among art clubs, and provides models four days weekly and facilities for exhibiting members' work, besides the usual advantages of a club for men and women artists. It is especially designed for the use of young painters who, having completed their studentship, desire an opportunity to work from the Life unfettered by school routine. To portrait painters who like constant and varied practice, and to black-and-white artists, the club is of special value, while landscape painters and others not residing in town will find it useful for showing pictures, having a town address, etc. All wishing to be included in the first list of members should apply at once to Miss E. Grace Mitchell, hon. sec., St. James' Art Club, 36, Victoria Street, S.W.

Some important prizes have been offered by the Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales for oil-paintings and water-colour drawings. Full particulars will be found in the advertising column on page VI. of this month's issue.

RESULT OF MESSRS. NORMAN AND STACEY'S PRIZE COMPETITION.

Prize of £5 5s. for an original drawing of a Bedroom Suite.—Frederick James Kimber, 4, Elizabeth Villas, Murchison Road, Leyton.

Prize of £5 5s. for an original drawing of a Dining-room Suite.—John Ednie, 73, Ashley Terrace, Edinburgh.